

REPORT.

The Committee to whom was referred the memorial of sundry citizens of Baltimore, complaining of the effects of Penitentiary labour, upon the Mechanics of that city, beg leave to

REPORT:

That shortly after the duty of considering the memorial above mentioned was imposed upon them, they proceeded to the city of Baltimore, for the purpose of making those enquiries which they deemed to be necessary to a full understanding of the subject under examination.— Finding that they could not finish the task at that city, within the time they contemplated, they proposed written interrogatories to many of the Mechanics, Merchants and Directors. To these enquiries they have received answers since their return.

The majority of the committee are of opinion that the effect of the present management of the Penitentiary labour, is injurious to the Mechanics, into competition with whose manufactures it comes. But they are not prepared to recommend a change in the use made of labour in that institution, until an experiment shall have been made by the manufacture, on a small scale, of other articles than those now made, nor until the effect of a new organization of the government of the Institution is procured. The experiment can be made at little or no cost to the State, and we may thus ascertain whether some of the articles now manufactured by power loom cannot be profitably made by the use of convict labour.

The weavers particularly complain. They are a highly useful manufacturing class of the community, and it is but right, whatever may be our opinion of the grievance complained of, that an experiment should be made, and that the labour of convicts should be so employed as at once to sustain them, and not leave in any the belief that it interferes with our ingenious and enterprising Me-